

THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
Fresno, California 93740-8023
Telephone: 278-2743

Fax: 278-5745
(EC-2)

September 21, 2015

Members present: Kevin Ayotte (Chair), Thomas Holyoke (Vice Chair), Abigail Hudson (ASI), Michael Jenkins (At-large), Madhu Katti (At-large), Loretta Kensinger (State-wide), Melanie Ram (University-wide), Rebecca Raya-Fernandez (At-large), and Provost Lynnette Zelezny (Ex-officio)

Members absent: President Joseph I. Castro (Ex-officio)

Guests: Venita Baker, Chris Hensen (English), Rima Maldonado (SSD), Dennis Nef (Vice Provost), and Mamta Rawat (Biology)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ayotte at 3:08pm in HML 3212

1.) Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda.

2.) Approval of the minutes of August 31, 2015

MSC approving the minutes of August 31, 2015

3.) Communications and announcements

a.) Chair Ayotte

The library dean will be sponsoring a mixer celebrating the opening of the new academic senate office in the library at 4:30 on Monday, October 5.

The Academic Senate photo will take place next Monday, September 28.

b.) Provost Zelezny

She noted that she just came from a meeting of the six new subcommittees on student success. One focuses on advising, another on bottle-neck classes, another on campus employment, another on remediation, another on high-impact practices, and the last on first-year experiences. They will submit a report at the end of the semester. Senator Kensinger (State-wide) expressed concern that some student success policies might end up impacting the likelihood that students will try to get a double major and this could hurt some departments and programs.

Vice Chair Holyoke asked about the new faculty center building the president has been talking about, wondering if it should prioritize faculty offices and classroom space. The provost indicated that the cabinet is discussing the number of faculty offices currently available, but said that the proposed building, should it even materialize, has not been designated for any purpose yet.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked about the implementation of APM 355, passed last year, which was to provide course releases for overloaded faculty. Nothing has been heard of it since, even though money came from the Chancellor to fund it. The provost acknowledged that this has slipped through the cracks because of the re-organization in the Office of Faculty Affairs. Chair Ayotte said he is already working on it.

c.) Action Items

1. Memo dated April 8, 2015, from Brian Haynes, CSU San Bernardino, to Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: Guidance and Recommendations for Faculty and Staff Regarding Service Animals. Memo has been received.

Chair Ayotte will distribute the memo to the faculty, but will fill in information pertinent to Fresno State regarding whom faculty

should contact with questions about compliance, problems in class, or concern about the health of the service animal.

2. Email dated September 14, 2015, from Esther Gonzalez, Assistant to the Vice President for Administration, to Dr. Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: Freedom of Expression Policy. Email has been received.

Interim Vice President Astone will be scheduled to come make a presentation on this policy to the Senate Executive Committee at a future meeting.

3. Email dated September 11, 2015, from Dennis Nef, Vice Provost, to Dr. Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: WASC / Fresno State Institutional Learning Outcomes. Email has been received.

Vice Provost Nef explained that WASC requires Fresno State to develop institutional learning outcomes which it will then assess, including assessment at the department / program level. While committee members understood the importance of accreditation by WASC, concern was expressed about a number of things. Senator Kensinger (State-wide Senate) felt that classes in the MI section of GE should be used to help assess the fifth outcome (exemplifying equity, ethics, and engagement). She also wanted to know more about how the third outcome (improving intellectual skills) was being assessed since some of the material sounded too abstract to really measure. Vice Provost Nef noted that signature assignments have been designed by several committees and has been heavily tested in the colleges. Colleges and departments are free to use tweaked versions of these assignments. And, he emphasized, departments do not have to assess every outcome every time.

Concern was also expressed about the workload this puts on faculty, as well as concerns as to whether imposing learning outcomes threatened academic freedom.

Provost Zelezny pointed out that WASC itself tries to be as flexible as possible, but itself is pressured to create standards by the U.S. Department of Education.

The new institutional learning outcomes will be presented to the Academic Senate.

4. Email dated September 16, 2015, from Martha A. Chavez to Venita Baker, Academic Senate Office Coordinator re: Student Recreation Center Advisory Council. Email has been received.

A call will be sent for one tenured / tenure-track faculty member to service on the advisory council.

5. Email dated September 16, 2015, from Thomas McClanahan, Associate Vice President for Research, to Dr. Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: need for two faculty members to serve on the Grants and Research Advisory Board.

A call will be sent for two tenured / tenure-track faculty members to serve on this board.

6. Email dated September 18, 2015, from Chris Henson (Senator from English) to Dr. Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: APM 311 Policy on Teaching Associates. Email has been received.

Chris Henson and Mamta Rawat made a brief presentation on amendments to APM 311 incorporating language necessary to implement the tuition waiver program for graduate students. There is money in the budget for the program, but new language in the APM was needed to make the program official.

Concern was expressed that while the language had been approved by the Senate Graduate Committee, it had not been before the Senate Personnel Committee.

Vice Chair Holyoke will send the proposed amendments to Chair Tsukimura of the Personnel Committee and ask them to prioritize

APM 311 on their agenda. Hopefully this new policy can be placed before the Academic Senate before the semester is over.

7. Chair Ayotte presented a last minute request from Interim Vice President Astone for clarification of faculty participation on search committees. Specifically, she was not sure what the difference was between appointments to administrative positions with line responsibility and appointments without line responsibility. After some discussion, the Executive Committee members decided that we did not know what the difference was either. Every example of a position we could think of seemed to report to a higher authority, which seems to be the meaning of “line responsibility.”

As a general matter, the Executive Committee would prefer to always default to the rules for appointments to search committee for administrators with line responsibility, because that requires greater faculty involvement. Senator Kensinger (State-wide Senate) said this was especially important in the case of the search for a new Title IX director.

The Executive Committee decided to ask the Academic Policy and Planning Committee to take a look at the language and consider amendments to clarify the issue, including the possibility of eliminating the section of APM 320 on faculty appointments to search committees for administrators without line responsibility.

- 4.) APM 237 – Policy on Faculty Responsibility for Accessible Instructional Materials. Personnel Committee. Second Reading.

Rima Maldonado from Services for Students with Disabilities came and spoke to the Executive Committee about the policy, and in general about the many problems confronting students with different types of disabilities. Currently she and her staff have 481 requests in front of them (down from 504) from students for assistance with class materials. She emphasized that just putting reading materials on Blackboard does not necessarily solve the accessibility problem, and that faculty really need to make sure they get textbook orders in on time to the bookstore and that all books ordered go through the bookstore.

Senator Ram (University-wide) noted that it would be easier for faculty to make their materials accessible if TILT made guidelines available to faculty on how to do so. Senator Kensinger (State-wide Senate) noted that even just making changes to syllabi can end up being a significant workload issue for faculty, and perhaps time release should be available for them to get the change made. Senator Ram noted that the funded TILT faculty workshops for making accessible syllabi are very helpful.

No further action on this item was taken.

5.) Consideration of nominations to committees.

The Executive Committee went into Executive Session at 5:02pm
The Executive Committee returned from Executive Session at 5:16pm

MSC approving the nomination of John McMillen (Kinesiology) to the search committee for an associate vice president for human resources.

MCS approving the nomination of Michael Mahoney (Recreation Administration) and Jennifer Moradian Watson (Educational Leadership) to the Athletics Advisory Council.

MCS approving the nomination of Michael Jenkins (Mechanical Engineering) to the President's Enrollment Management Advisory Group.

The Senate Executive Committee adjourned at 5:18pm.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Monday, October 5, 2015.

Submitted by:
Thomas Holyoke
Vice Chair
Academic Senate

Approved by:
Kevin Ayotte
Chair
Academic Senate